

Lesson Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Lesson ID: 92559-44531

Title: CHAPLAINS IN LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT (LIC)

Operation/Exercise Name: MARFOR PROMOTE LIBERTY Observed: 13 Jun 1990

Originator: COMMARFOR PANAMA

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5. (U) OBSERVATION:

The Chaplain of a Marine expeditionary force can play a critical role in mission accomplishments by a command operating in a Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) environment.

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6. () DISCUSSION:

7. (%) LESSON LEARNED:

The Chaplain of a Marine expeditionary force can play a critical role in mission accomplishments by a command operating in a Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) environment.

6. (U) DISCUSSION:

a. (U) LIC environments are complex and difficult in that they are neither full combat or war conditions nor are they peaceful situations.

b. (U) Political, economic, social, and ethnic instability is the norm for LIC situations.

c. (U) Into the 1990's, most military experts and many political leaders forecast U.S. military forces will be involved with LIC missions instead of the Cold War confrontation with the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact nations.

d. (U) As Marine Corps commands are deployed into LICs, their Command Chaplain will not only be along, but can play a key role in the mission success of that unit.

7. (U) LESSONS LEARNED:

a. (U) Main objectives in LIC situations include:

(1) (U) Providing security assistance to local police and law-enforcement personnel e.g., Marine Forces Panama (MARFORPM) personnel helped the new Panamanian National Police become established in local areas, providing limited assistance and training in various security operational procedures.

(2) (U) Helping the local, regional, and national leaders become strong and respected enough to enable democratic processes to succeed in the country.

(3) (U) Assisting the local people to start or restart their political and economic institutions and interactions, so that their society can "get its feet on the ground" becoming stable and self-sustaining. Developing and encouraging "hope" among the people is the key in this process, or else revolutionary ideas and leaders will give different and often violent directions to follow.

b. (U) LIC environments require not only "traditional" military presence and operations, but also much interaction with civilian authorities and the local population.

c. (U) As a Marine command seeks to do "nation-building" and help local communities become stable, the Command Chaplain can and should provide rapport not only between U.S. forces and local nationals, but also, if possible, among local leaders with whom the U.S. forces and/or Marines are working.

d. (U) Marines in LICs need to learn as much as possible of the country and their own Area of Operations (AO). The MARFORPM Chaplain was able to provide educational information and briefings to our Marines and sailors concerning the religious beliefs, traditions, behaviors, etc. (e.g. the Easter Holy Week festivities in Panama). He also coordinated 5-person "Presentation on Panama" for our personnel so that they might learn about the history, economics, culture, people, and politics of Panama.

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8. (U) RECOMMENDED ACTION:

a. (U) That Chaplains assigned to Marine expeditionary units deploying to LIC environments be alerted to the key role(s) he should play in the unit mission accomplishments.

b. (U) That Marine expeditionary Command Chaplains be educated and trained in both LIC environment characteristics and in possible Chaplain-related ministries and programs which will be essential in the command's AO, such as Community Relations (COMREL) Projects, contacts with local clergy, interaction with educational/school leaders, liaison with other helping professionals, etc.

c. (U) That Command Chaplain's maximize their role and abilities as "educator" to provide or facilitate important information about the people, culture, and nation in which Marines are serving -- especially in LIC conditions.

9. (U) COMMENTS:
None stated.

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